This Issue

PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM

Looks At

Comic Book PRODUCTION AND PUBLICATION

THE COMIC BOOK CLUB OF ITHACA

presents

ITHACON III

May 7 & 8, 1977

Greater Ithaca Activities Center

218 N. Albany St. Ithaca, N.Y.

If you attended or heard about ITHACON last year, you know that is was a good convention. We had many compliments and few complaints, and of the latter, the most frequently heard was that the con lasted only one day, which made it hard on those who travelled some distance. Since our policy is to act on all complaints over which we have control, this year Central New York's only comic convention is taking the plunge and going to a full two days!

We are not, however, sacrificing the qualities that distinguish us from the myriad other conventions that are held each year. ITHACON is an activity of the Comic Book Club of Ithaca, and is run on a strictly break-even basis; nobody receives compensation for their work other than the pleasure of running a worth while event. The emphasis is on program activities, and everything that we can think of is done to offer you, the convention member, as much as possible.

Our tentative guest list for 1977 includes Al Milgrom, Walter Simonson, Len Wein, and Marv Wolfman, and discussions are in progress with other personalities. Our art display and auction are being reorganized and expanded, the dealers' room will be larger and more diverse, and other activities are in the planning stage. Admission will be $2.00/day at the door, or $3.00 for both days before May 1, which is the same amount as last year; advance registration will save time when you arrive. For out-of-towners, we are not affiliated with a motel, but we will help with reservations if you let us know in advance.

Pass the word, and mark the date on your calendar. We'll see you at ITHACON II!

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CLUB BUSINESS...

Next Meeting: The PCC, continuing its world famous trend of meeting every secon Saturday, next gathers February 12 and then March 12, each at 6:30 PM, at Greg Eide's comic book shop, 11 Federal St., Pittsburgh.

Schedule Change: Due to increasing postal costs, we're experimenting with a new system of circulation. Pittsburgh residents will now pick their bimonthly copies of PFF up at the meetings. If you miss a meeting, then your copy will be mailed to you within the week. Those out-of-area and corresponding members who don't attend meetings (shame on you!) will continue to receive PFF through the mails. Please help us out. And of course, you can't receive PFF without a subscription regularly!

On the subject, we once again apologize for lateness. This issue is late due to the slowdown of the entire civilization due to the unreasonable weather during the latter part of January. Hopefully, 'twont happen again.

Plugs: First, everybody buy Alpha-Omega, available at meetings for only 25¢. This recommendation comes under fear of death by the editor! Next, the third issue of our general slick-o-neat-o fanzine, COMICS AND FANDOM will be out soon for $1.00. Edited by artists Dave Mosser and Harold Cupec, the zine's contents were on display at last year's PITTCON. Buy!

Say Hello: A new friend in the industry comes to the Pittsburgh Comix Club-- DC Comics's Mike Gold has been acquainted with out fannish activities and has volunteered to send us news and covers for pre-release publication! (Remember that Howard Bender, our own humble superstar, has arranged for Marvel's covers to appear herein). Welcome, Mike.

News And Stuff: Even though PFF's no longer in the business of carrying news of the comics world, we here confirm some rumors that've been floating around: a) Yes, Rich Buckler is starting a new comic book company, called FBN, which will start publishing "experimental" overground comics this year! b) Yes, DC is raising it's prices. (Boooo!) Effective with comics released after March first, 36 page books will be 35¢ and 52 pagers will be 60¢. The 60 centers will return to 34 pages of story and art, no package changes will occur in the 35¢ ones, and no change in price or format at all is slated for the 84 page dollar comics. Ah, well...

continued next page

PITTCON '77 Progress Report:

Money!: That marvelous Shadow drawing on the left is the work of Howard Bender (pencils) and Keith Giffen (inks), and was done (several times this size) especially for PITTCON '77. The drawing will be auctioned off at the February meeting to raise funds for our third full-scale comic art convention. There's a minimum bid, so let it be known that this unique piece of art isn't going for chicken fat!

Events: In addition to the events and programming announced in the past two issues of PFF (grab 'em up while the supply lasts), we are proud to announce that PITTCON '77 will feature the Lou Pasczi Hat Eating! It seems that, when Howard Bender was first starting out, the loquacious Lou commented that should Howard ever draw a story for Marvel, Pasczi would eat his hat.

So, with the news that a five-page Sub-Mariner story will appear in one of next year's annuals, pencilled by The Bender, came the news of the Hat Consumption. The gala event will be held in the dealers' rooms at PITTCON!

More: The whole week of PITTCON '77 will be Popular Culture Week in the city of Pittsburgh, climaxing, of course, with the con on the 22-24th. Part of the festivities will be a special window display at Jay's Book Stall in Oakland and the grand opening of the oft-mentioned Hillman Library Permanent Collection of comics and related items. (We're also talking a certain PCCer who just happens to write the AVENGERS into making the Avengers show up in Pittsburgh for an issue or two— well, Shooter? Hmm? Willya, willya, huh? Bombard him with letters, care of Marvel, folks!)

PITTCON bumperstickers (produced by Ken Klaczak) are on sale at meetings— two colors, 30¢ a piece or four for a buck!

* * *

Who Says Working For Comic Book Publishers Can't Be Fun?

by Howard Siegel

Since the theme for this issue is "publication and production," in itself a very wide scope, I'm going to throw you FCCers a three-quarter-nickel curve by invading my memory banks for some tidbits having to do with some of the people and places that supposedly are to whom and where the responsibility for getting the comics onto the retailer's shelves lies.

One of the big problems when publishers move executive offices is the packing and transferal of paper work. That includes research material in the form of old comic books. When NPP went to 909 Third Avenue in the pre-Warner Communication days, the file clerks were horrified to learn that two issues of a title run had been missing from the archives for Lord knows how many years. What were those forsaken items? Issues six and seven of JIMMY WAKELY COMICS! Out of a list of ten possibilities, most of us would have made that one about the fifteenth. The fact that both had Frazetta artwork in them maight have been the cause.

Ofttimes levity becomes the dominant atmosphere in the bullpen areas. At Marvel more than the others, but once in a while even the staid halls of DC liven up. Do you know what event stands out as the most memorable to those who attended Marv Wolfman's farewell party (he was moving over to Marvel) ? The salami and baloney throwing contest! Don't ask me for particulars, else Julie Schwartz will finally learn how several slices got into his overcoat pocket.

With the new breed of fan-turned-pro being the bulk of the work force, you can understand that in the area of dress, jeans are in and twilled jackets are out. My 'godson," E. E. 'Duffy" Vohland stands six-feet-three and tips the scales at the near-300 pound mark. Scott Edelman is no slouch either. He goes about six-four and is an easy 200 pounder. A lot of walking beef at today's steak prices. Back several years they did a lot of oddball things together. I'll never forget the faces of several people waiting in the anteroom at 575 Madison Avenue when the two sauntered in carrying purple and gold embroidered handbags and matching tams! To their credit they could not be discouraged. They still use the purses.

The aforementioned Marvel bullpen offices have been rennovated many times on the sixth floor. Several years ago, there was a freelance section across the hall where the nonstaffers worked (and played). During convention times, many came into the Big Apple short on bread and long on the desire to sleep somewhere indoors where it's safe. One morning I walked in early to give Roy Thomas some research material and found Arv Jones, fresh in from Detroit, sleeping under a pile of Captain America posters with a cardboard cutout of Thor hovering overhead. (Arv, incidentally, was way ahead of his time. He developed a black version of Captain America that could easily have been the Falcon. Only trouble was, Arv was still in high school and wasn't ready to crash the pro ranks.) Guys were passing in and out, dropping scrap paper, candy wrappers, etc. on him as they walked by. Someone then put a sign on him that read "Cleaning Woman: Please Throw Out!" They had fun even back then.

Perhaps the most pulchritudinous woman's libber in all prodom is Paty, scourge of the Marvel Bullpen. Den Mother Marie Severin is hard put to contain Paty. Her favorite pasttime in the early days of her apprenticeship at Marvel, while training back and forth from upstate New York,

continued next page

was doing caricatures of the bigwigs. It was common to see a magic marker sketch of Stan Lee contemplating his next college appearance while sitting on the porcelain potty. Or Jumbo John Verpoorten breast feeding Roger Slifer. Her X-rated pieces involving various mainliners of the stable had very short lifetimes on the walls, lest the Cadence people walk in unexpectedly. If social permissiveness reaches an all-time low, a collection of her work could be a best seller. But despite all these antics, a nicer young lady there is not. Her cover does not reveal the book contents underneath.

Under the fist of Carmine Infantino, it was a well known fact that working conditions at NPP were, to say the least, quite convent in atmosphere; hospital sterile white in appearance; and nonconducive to creative thinking. The staffers weren't happy with that kind of a modus operandi, and so darkened rooms in order to "loosen up." It was not unusual to see Len Wein at Marvel finishing off a script for DC, or Paul Levitz trading DC titles for Marvel at the rate of two-for-one, in order to find out what the competition was doing. At National you couldn't acknowledge that they had rivals in the industry. Meetings on the street were not unusual so that arrangements could be made to get help in meeting inking and pencilling deadlines between friends. To this day Carmine doesn't know that five Marvel people inked a LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES issue at Tony Isabella's pad and spent the money gotten for the job by having a feast at Sun Luck Royale on Third Avenue and 54th Street!

So if you PCCers think that fun can't be had while getting comics ready for publication, you're wrong!

* * *

And Now, A Word From Our.....

Ron Kienzle

Economics And Comic Books

Hey, isn't it great. We can now buy a comic book with twice the story of a normal book for less than twice the cost. How can they make money on it? Easy. Actually, is the sales are the same, the companies make more money on the 50¢ books. How? Well, that takes a little economics lesson.

A thirty cent book has seventeen pages of story, ten pages of ads, and about five pages of "in-house:" letter pages, bullpen pages, etc. (excluding the covers).

A fifty cent book has thirty-four pages of story, ten pages of ads, and about four "in-house" pages, also excluding covers.

We can see that the cost of the covers and ads contained thereupon, and the regular ad pages are the same for both books. The "in-house" pages vary only slightly. Both books receive the same ad money. The cost of producing a story, that is, the cost of a writer, penciler, and inker, is twice that of a thirty cent book for a fifty center. The cost of putting each comic together is approximately the same for each.

There are three significant differences between income and expenditures: a) retail cost, thirty cents vs. fifty cents, b) story production cost, and c) paper and printing cost. Now, although the money the company receives is less than the retail price, let's assume the ratio is about the same 3-5. Letting A represent the retail price, B story production cost,

continued next page

and C per-page printing and paper cost, an equation for the income/ expenditure ratio is:

$$B + C \quad A$$

meaning that costs must not exceed income. For each size book, the equations look like this:

$$B + 32C \quad 30¢$$
$$2B + 48C \quad 50¢$$

Let us assume that the story production cost of a seventeen page story is $5000— this is an uneducated guess— so that for a thirty-four page story it's $10,000. We'll also assume a print run of 400,000 and sales of 200,000. The equations become:

$$\$5000 + (32C \times 400000) \quad \$60,000$$
$$\$10000 + (48C \times 400000) \quad \$120,000$$

This reduces to

$$\$5000 + 12,800,000 \text{ pp} \quad \$60,000$$
$$\$10,000 + 19,200,000 \text{ pp} \quad \$120,000$$

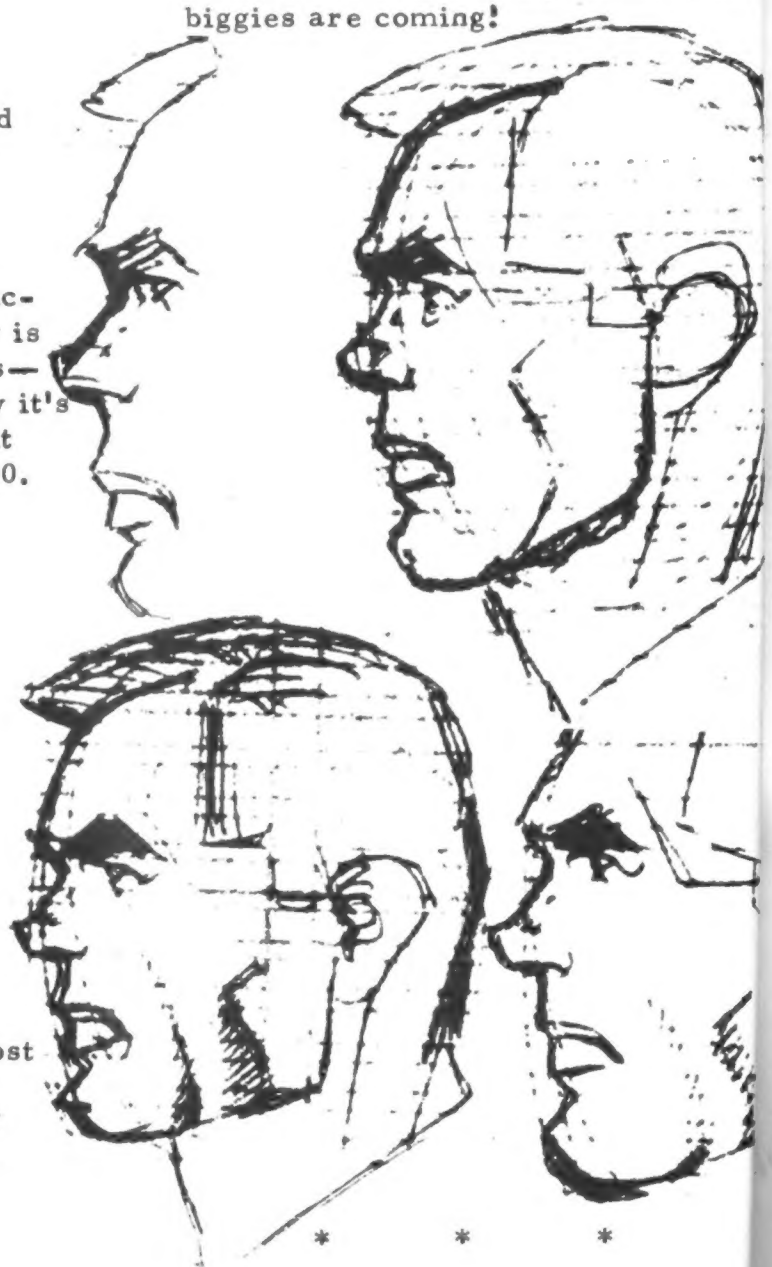
These can be changed to:

$$12,800,000 \quad \$55,000$$
$$19,200,000 \quad \$110,000$$

If we assume a break-even situation, for a thirty cent book the cost per page must be less than forty three cents; for a fifty cent book, it must be less than fifty seven cents, a 1-1.35 ratio. If the companies are just breaking even on a thirty cent package, switching to a fifty cent for mat would give the company a profit of $280. If one makes $1000 per print run on a thirty cent format, one coul make $1,350 on a fifty cent book.

For an eighty page $1.00 book wit sixty eight pages of story, the ratio over a thirty cent book is 1-1.308 or less, but if each book has five in-hou pages, there is space for twenty sev pages of ads.

Thus it seems that the bigger the book, the more profit possible, assuming the same sales. Get your hal dollars and dollars out, kiddies, the biggies are coming!



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Mike Gold
(212) 484-8518
January 31, 1977

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HOTLINE CHANGES SCHEDULE

Various changes in the operation of the DC DIRECT CURRENTS HOTLINE will be initiated in response to an overwhelming volume of telephone calls.

Effective February 1st, the Hotline is shifting from weekly to semi-monthly reports, giving callers more time to get ahold of each announcement, thereby cutting the number of unsuccessful attempts in half. Announcements will be changes around the 15th of February, the 1st of March, and the 15th of March.

In April or May, DC will shift over to monthly reports of two to three minute length, with announcements from several different DC personalities. Both processes should cut down the likelihood of a caller getting a busy signal.

During the month of December, 1976, 71,000 calls were completed on the Hotline. At that time, a caller had to make an average of three attempts in order to get through to the service. In January, with school closings and outside activities curtailed due to the cold spell, the Hotline grew in popularity - at some points, according to New York Telephone, an average of 3,000 calls were placed to the service during each hour from 4:00 PM to Midnight. It is estimated over 900,000 attempts were made during the mid-December to mid-January period; some 60,000 different people are estimated to be using this service.

In addition to the high volume of busy signals, an additional problem of wrong numbers is creating a burden on the nationwide WATSline system. Several WATSlines with numbers similar to that of the DC DIRECT CURRENTS HOTLINE have been plagued with as many as 50 wrong number calls each day. This schedule change should lessen this problem as well.

The actual DC DIRECT CURRENTS HOTLINE numbers remain the same: 800-223-7760 outside of New York State, Alaska, Hawaii and Canada, 800-442-8108 in New York State outside of New York City, and 212-757-9517 in New York City. Individuals from all points who wish to get through on the non-toll-free line could do so by dialing the 212-757-9517 number, above.

# # # # #

For more information, contact
Mike Gold, 212-484-8518.

BRAUE HA

And We Speak Again Of Men Of The World

by Tom Hegeman

The best storyteller in the area of graphic art does not live in California and does not draw THE ETERNALS. He does not live in New York nor did he ever write and draw THE SPIRIT. He lives in Italy where he writes and draws Corto Maltese. His name is Hugo Pratt.

He is a big man, this Hugo Pratt. He was born June 15, 1927 near Rimini Italy or in Venice depending on whether you believe Maurice Horn or Claude Moliterni. At the age of ten he accompanied his parents to Ethiopia, his father being in the Italian army, Ethiopia at that time an Italian colony. He spent five years there, returning to Italy in 1942.

Post-war Italy was not the most auspicious place for one aspiring to be a comic artist. In 1950 Pratt took off for South America where he remained for 20 years. There he created and drew some of his more celebrated strips including "Sergent Kirk" and "Wheeling." In 1970he created Corto Maltese for Pif-Gadget.

Hugo Pratt is amazing. He is multilingual (Italian, French, Spanish, Portugese, and God knows what else). He's traveled the entire globe. One critic has compared him to Hemmingway. Others who know him well claim that he is a keen judge of men, quick to spot a faker or a friend . Outgoing, he makes friends wherever he goes. All the supporting characters in Corto Maltese in fact are based on or inspired by his friends.

But if you would know this man, look at his creation. At the outset it should be clear that Corto Maltese is not Hugo Pratt. However, Pratt imbues him with many of his ideas and, thus, to understand Corto Maltese is to understand Hugo Pratt.

So who is this Corto Maltese? He was originally a character in a story called "Ballad of The Salty Sea." Three years later, when Pratt was called on to do a strip for Pif, he chose to use Corto, since he, of all the characters in "Ballad," seemed to have the most potential for development.

Corto Maltese is the son of a British sailor stationed out at Gibraltar and Malta. His mother was Nina of Gibraltar, an Andalousian. He is a hero in the tradition of Conrad and Stevenson-- a man of the sea, cold, aloof, coolly objective. His adventures are set in the 1920's , a time Pratt th inks is just at the end of an age of romanticism. His thoughts are those of modern man (actually, a modern man named Hugo Pratt) but he is a romantic, a product of his world.

Like Pratt, he wanders far. His adventures begin in South America, from where he travels to Africa. He fights in World War I in Europe. He has no geographical barriers, no racial differences. He takes men and women as they are and is equally at home with a Massai warrior as with a Brazilian millionaire.

He has been called "super cool;" unflappable might be a better word. It is the British calm, more accurately the British aristocratic calm, for he is unmistakeably an aristocrat, if not by birth then by choice. His calmness, however, is deceptive, that of one who won't act until necessary but can at any moment. Elegant, no

continued next page

ool, the first to spot cowardice or pet-iness.

Corto Maltese is a captain without a oat, which is just as well. He would be ied to a boat, and he has no ties. This ould probably apply to romance, too; ou see it about as often as Corto's boat.

A look at one of Pratt's stories is nstructive. "Le Dernier Coup" ("The ast Strike") in Pif-Gadget #194. The ction takes place in British Somolia. Mohammad Hassan, known as the Mad Mullah, and his band of dervishes, are esisting the British (as they would, n fact, until 1920 and his death). We find Corto at a British fort manned by he King's Africa Rifles. The captain who is known only as Brad) is apparent-y old line. When Corto gives a drink o a Danakil names Cush, in the cap-ain's quarters, against the rules, the captain strikes Cush with a riding crop nd has Corto locked up when Corto emarks that Brad is a coward. The captain quickly releases Corto. It is September 23, the anniversary of the date Juda O'Leary betrayed his brother wo years earlier during the Irish re-volution. Juda and his brother had just blown up part of a military convoy nd had been trapped in an old man-sion holding off the British troops. During his turn on guard duty that night Juda dealt with the British, shot his brother, and disappeared.

As the captain finishes his story, he fort comes under attack. Corto efuses to help defend and the captain s about to shoot him, but then the ort is overrun. Corto escapes by iding in a cactus patch. He betrays is presence to shoot Brad and put im out of his misery as he is being urned alive by the rebels.

Cush, who is leading the rebels, llows Corto to escape. When Corto later asks him why, he replies, "Because one who plays with death as you do is crazy, and the insane are sacred to Allah." They leave together discussing the cowardice of the captain.

This is an awful lot to pack into twenty pages and do well. Hugo Pratt does it superbly. The pages reproduced after this article can only give some idea of Pratt's effectiveness as a storyteller. They do give examples of several notable aspects of his work.

One aspect is absolute historical authenticity. Like most top arti sts, he has a huge reference library. Hugo Pratt has stated that he is maniacal (his word) about detail. It shows.

Another aspect is the way Pratt builds personalities. The strength of a Corto Maltese story rests on the characterizations within. In "The Last Strike," the reader knows that it is only the clash of Cuch's and the Captain's personalities that brings on the attack. Pratt does not have to tell you this; he shows it; for example, he nowhere specifically states that Brad is Juda O'Leary. His drawing and storytelling methods suffice.

Although I don't believe I've read Pratt discussing it, a look at his work shows an influence of film. The angles,

continued

pacing, and placement of panels all reflect this. The sequence where gunfire ends Brad's account of Juda O'Leary's betrayal is as close to film technique as I've seen done in comics. Very few artists would use an entire panel solely for one sound effect. Little things count. Who would think to stick just the top of the exclamation point outside of the frame? Though the effect is not blatant, it seems to push the sound closer to us, just as the sound in a movie would come suddenly. Both make the viewer sit up.

Many artists, American and foreign, have been influenced by film. Any artist worth mentioning can shift from a long or medium shot to a closeup. But very few are as effective as Hugo Pratt. Look at the sequence where Corto refuses to help, Brad threatens to shoot him, and Corto calls his bluff. The fist and third panels in the sequence are placed so well that you feel the camera move in for the closeup rather than just shi ft.

Though Pratt himself has never brought up the subject, other critics have noted the film influence. One has noted similarities between Corto Maltese and early Clint Eastwood films. I've always wondered why no one ever tried to compare him to Bogie. Let me make it clear that Corto Maltese is not Bogart! But there are those moments, there are those moments....In any case, someone should ask Pratt about his favorite films; I suspect it would be a very interesting group.

The only major element of Pratt's stories which the accompanying example does not show is his use of the supernatural and magic. Even in his first story, "The Secret of Tristan Bantam," a messenger from Tristan's sister is able to sense danger and hears the voice of Morgana, who is deeply involved with the Macumba, a Brazilian cult similar to the Carribean voodoo. Pratt says that the use of magic stems from its prevalence in South America and Africa, where Corto often finds himself. He admits to being deeply influenced by the occult when he was in South America and Africa.

In any event, he uses the magic well. It fits in. It goes with the story. I've already mentioned Pratt's gift for characterization; with two or three characters he can create an entire atmosphere. It is no trouble then, with the number of characters he has tramping through his stories to establish the appropriate atmosphere for the use of magic.

Hugo Pratt is to my mind the finest graphic artist in the world, in black and white, as the four years of Corto Maltese in Pif-Gadget demonstrate . He has stated that he thinks in black and white, and does his research with an eye to the contrasts and composition of black and white forms. Since 1974, Corto Maltese has been printed in color. I've seen only samples of it, but the samples are beautiful. He does not do the coloring. He still thinks in terms of black and white. His colorist is his wife Ann (who translates all of it from the original Italian into French).

The improvement of the color, something that didn't seem possible given Pratt's mastery of black and white. One wonders what further improvements could be made. The strip now seems close to perfect. I'm confident, though, that if any improvements can be made, Hugo Pratt will find and make them.

To the best of my knowledge, only one English translation has been done in the states, and I have no idea how to get it. Several volumes in French have been published, both black and white and in color. Bud Plant gets some in from time to time. It's well worth purchasing.

continued next page

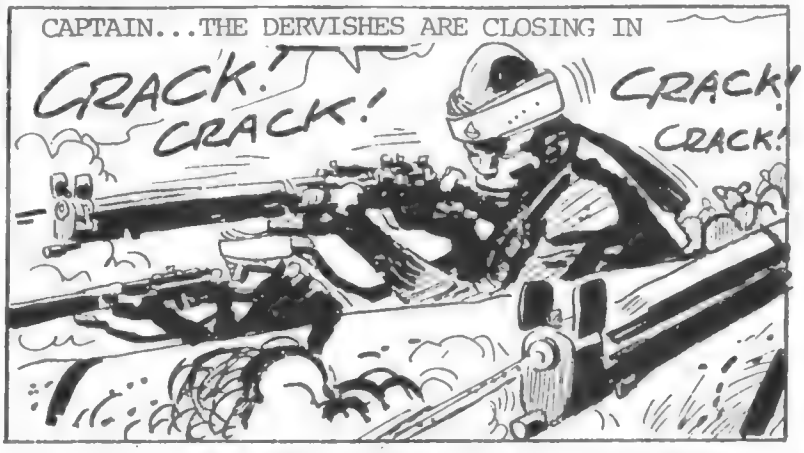
THAT NIGHT DURING HIS WATCH, JUDA O'LEARY CONTACTED THE BRITISH AND FOR A LARGE REWARD AND CERTAIN GUARANTEES...
...RETURNED TO ELIMINATE HIS BROTHER SIMON.
BANG! BANG!
SEVERAL HOURS LATER HE DISAPPEARED OFFICALLY, RICH AND BEAR ING A MARK OF IMFAMY IN HIS SOUL.
THEY SAY HE LOST HIMSELF SOMEWHERE IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE, ALONE WITH HIS GUILT.
CRACK!
1432-10- © Ed. VAILLANT Paris

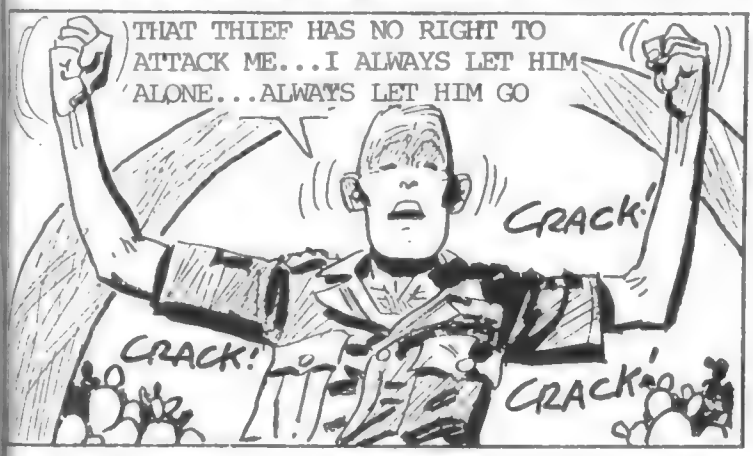
ELIMINATE
ON.
ED
G A MARK·
IMFAMY
HIS
UL.

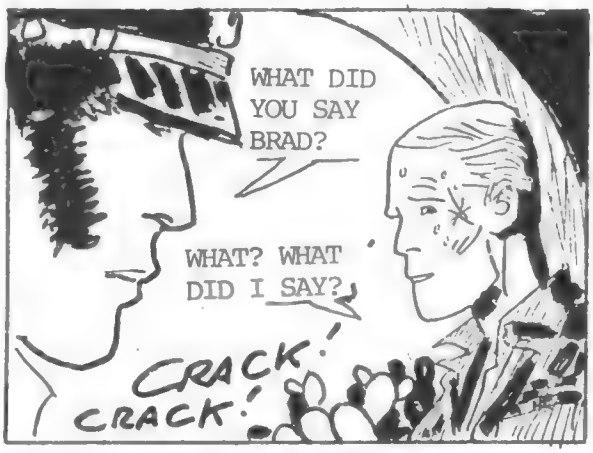
SOMEONE'S ATTACKING THE FORT
THE MAD MULLAH'S REBELS PERHAPS

CRACK!

THE BASTARD CAN'T DO THIS...HE CAN'T


CAPTAIN...THE DERVISHES ARE CLOSING IN
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!


THAT THIEF HAS NO RIGHT TO ATTACK ME...I ALWAYS LET HIM ALONE...ALWAYS LET HIM GO
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!

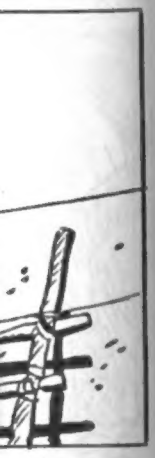

WHAT DID YOU SAY BRAD?
WHAT? WHAT DID I SAY?
CRACK!
CRACK!

NOTHING... OF ANY IMPORTANCE ...CORTO..
2432-11- © M. VAILLANT Paris

GO SEE IF THE MACHINE GUN-NERS ARE IN PLACE
CRACK!
CRACK!

I'M A CIVILIAN...AND I HAVE NO INTEREST IN YOUR WAR
YOU ARE A BRITISH SUBJECT... AND YOU...
YOU ARE IN A BRITISH COLONY... IF NECESSARY...I...CAN ORDER YOU TO HELP ME...I CAN EVEN SHOOT YOU ON THE SPOT IF YOU REFUSE...
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!
YES...BUT BY SHOOTING ME IN THE BACK
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
YOU HEARD ME.
CAPTAIN...THE REBELS ARE COMING OVER THE WALLS!
SERGEANT...
SERGEANT...
THE SERGEANT IS DEAD CAPTAIN. ONLY TWO OF US ARE LEFT
I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE
1432-42- © Ed. VAILLANT Paris

CRACK!
CRACK!



THEY'RE ON THE WALLS
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO CORTO?

HIDE... IT'S NOT HEROIC. BUT IT'S ALL THAT'S LEFT

DEVIL TAKE HIM!... THAT ALMOST HIT ME
1432-13- © M. VAILLANT Paris

WHAT? HERE ALREADY?

I'LL BET YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED THAT I WANT NO PART OF ALL THIS

* * *

The Unrecognized Inker

by Neil Renton

Quick, give me the names of ten comic book inkers. Unless you are an exceptionally knowledgeable fan, you probably can't do it without looking at your collection. Most people do not realize the importance of the inker of a comic book story. Though he doesn't lay out the action, he places detail in the drawing, which shows up in places like character's faces. An example where the differences between an inked and uninked page is CONAN #19. Although Barry Smith draws quite a lot of detail into his pencils, more so than just about any other penciller, the second half of the book, which was not inked, lacks the calrity of the first sixteen pages when the book is produced.

As I mentioned, inking shows prominently in faces. Compare the facial features in KARATE KID #1 from DC with those of HULK #197 from Marvel. You'll notice a similarity to the style of Charlton's E-MAN, despite the different pencillers, because they were all inked by the same man, Joe Staton, one of the most easily recognized inkers in comics.

Often the inker makes or breaks the artwork in a comic book. Example: artist Gene Colan– if the same inker who embellished his pencils for SUB-MARINER #(Mike Esposito) had inked his work on DRACULA, the effect of the book would have been ruined. Esposito's job on the Sub-Mariner story was fine, but to capture the mood and emotion needed for comics like DRACULA or DR. STRANGE an expert like Tom Palmer was necessar Palmer has inked quite a variety of comic from THE AVENGERS to the X-MEN, and his inking is usually fantastic. He is able to blend with the penciller to create just the proper mood.

The inker who carries the action of the pencils in a clear way while adding enough detail of his own to capture the tone of the story is to be congratulated for his job well done. Men such as Tom Palmer, Dick Giordano, Joe Sinnott, and Joe Staton, who can grab the reader with an excellent inking style, help to make some of today's comic art the best that it has ever been. Unfortunately, they receive little recognition for their work. The next time you read a comic book and take a long look at the artwork, examine the many details and appreciate the job of the inker.

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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
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SOME MEN CALL ME WILL-O'-THE-WISP!
BUT YOU CAN CALL ME DEATH!
INTRODUCING THE MOST SENSES SHATTERING NEW SUPER-STAR OF ALL!
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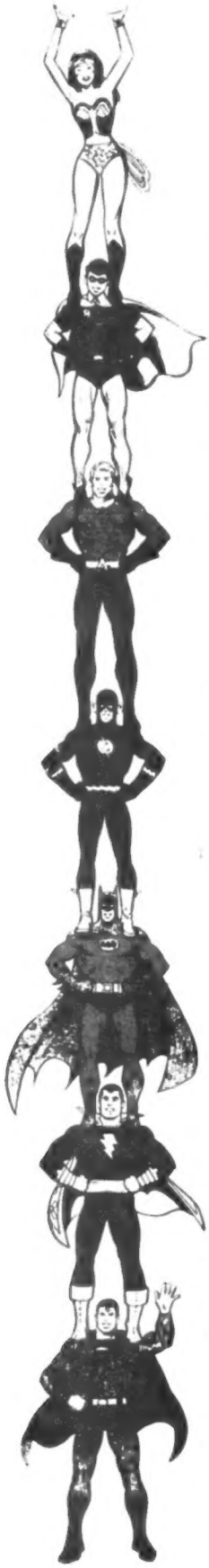

SUPERHEROS NEEDED!!!

There's a "Help Wanted" sign hanging in the front window of the JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA. Volunteers are being urgently sought to assume the responsibilities of Hawkman, Wildcat, Johnny Thunder, The Atom, and Wonder Woman. Interested? The only qualifications are that the applicants make and wear the costumes of these famed Defenders of Righteousness at this year's Pitcon COSTUME SPECTACULAR, the night of April 23, 1977.

Volunteers are already working on costumes for the JUSTICE LEAGUE, as well as for the other members of the JUSTICE SOCIETY. All will assemble on the night of the twenty-third for a senses-shattering, mind-boggling meeting ON STAGE! LIVE!! of the two greatest organizations of super-crime fighters the twentieth century has known. (The infamous SOLOMON GRUNDY will also be on hand -- other Super Villains are also needed!)

Don't be left out! If you've ever thought about dressing up as a Super Hero, now is the time!

Richard Felnagle, who assisted with last year's Costume Parade, has volunteered this year to assist any Club Members who would like to make a costume this year. A major picture-taking session is now being planned for April 2, to be followed by participating members visiting some local charitable organizations for additional Club publicity.

If you're interested, please call Richard at 661-3939.

The Justice Society needs you!!!